The Myrtle

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13.

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For the Myrtle.

"It's Just Like One of Ours."

A nobleman was travelling through
A region black and wild,
And with him in his carriage had
His wife, and nurse, and child:
O'er taken by a storm they sought,
The shelter of a shepherd's cot.

The simple folks with awe were filled,
Such grandeur to behold:
But piled their fire with wood to cheer
Their guests so wet and cold.
The babe had suffered like the rest,
And it, the nurse in haste undressed.

The little one before the fire,
Was bathed and rubbed and dried;
The shepherd aud his wife observed,
It's fine clothes laid aside:
Amazement filled their hearts that day—
"It's just like one of ours!" they say.

Without the dress that wealth can buy,
The nobleman is hard to find:
He has no magic wand to show
Him better than his kind.
All men are brothers—high and low,
One common fatherhood can show. H. H. D.

Sharing.

I said it in the mountain path,
I say it on the mountain stairs:
The best thing any mortal hath
Are those which every mortal shares.

The grass is softer to my tread
For rest it yields unnumbered feet;
Sweeter to me the wild rose red,
Because it makes the whole world sweet.

Do to every boy and girl,
Every creature too,
Nothing you would not in turn,
Have them do to you.

The Boy Who Hadn't Any.

RIGHT at hand, and indeed on the very spot where the minister stood every Sunday, two tall evergreen trees swept their spicy branches. The glittering chandeliers and altar-rail were almost hidden under festive holly-branches and hemlocks, while mysterious packages, heaps of candy-bags, and baskets of oranges were scattered about in bewildering confusion. Bustling about in the midst of all this was the committee on Christmas presents, as busy as bees, and as merry as only such a company can be. It does seem as if a Sunday-school committee on Christmas presents is a little ahead of all others in happy, lively flying about, without any visible end in view.

"Did you ever?" announced the young lady who was tying the last label, "here's one extra candy-bag and orange."

"Are you sure every body is supplied?" asked the chairman, holding her list anxiously in one hand, and the basket of Christmas sweets in the other.

"Positively sure there's one to carry," answered the young lady, snapping her knot by way of emphasis.

"Write a label for it, Mary, and write, 'For the little boy who hasn't any present,'" suggested a pleasant-faced lady from a lowly seat on the altar-step.

"What an idea!" laughed the chairman, poising her pencil; but surely enough, after a brief moment of hesitation, she did write this very strange label, and tie it to the bag and orange, noticing with some satisfaction that they were the very largest and nicest of them all, not looking a bit as if left over. How the pleasant-

faced lady came to have such a flitting thought, or the chairman to write it, or how she happened to know that the child whom Satan would be apt to overlook might be a boy, nobody knows to this day, but so it was.

There was likewise no reason under the stars that bright wintry night why Chub should be happy as he shuffled along in his old boots, unless it was that every body else was happy, and Chub always went with the crowd.

Far down the street the stores were a blaze of light, while sleigh-bells rang, and passers-by, laden with all sorts of queer, suggestive-looking packages, rushed along without ever seeing him.

For a while he amused himself guessing what was inside the brown papers; loosely-tied they were, because the busy clerks had no time for such unimportant matters as wrappers and twine. A rocker meant a cradle or a rocking-horse, according to size. An arm or foot was a doll or Santa Claus surely. A square box held by pink tape was candy from the big tempting store just around the corner (Chub knew exactly how those very boxes looked when they were being handed over the counter), while a paper-bag with a bunchy appearance meant apples without a shadow of doubt.

Soon he grew tired of other people's good times, and a half wonder crept into his bewildered little mind why it was that he didn't have a Christmas, too. You see he and the bigger brother lived, or rather slept, down at the noisy, busy depot. It would be hard to tell where they lived, these homeless little boys. Lion carried bundles and satchels, and ran on errands generally, at which Chub assisted, by taking the overflow of business.

"Chub, yer ken hev' what's left over," was the brotherly invitation of Lion, both as to work and daily sustenance.

And Chub had grown used to it, and did not think it a hard life, only on the rare occasions when Lion, by reason of business running low, was very cross, and threatened to leave him stark alone if he whimpered "nother onct" that he was hungry.

Ah, yes! Lion was kind to him, and many's the night he had taken him under his coat, because he "were such a little chap the freezin' would get a good chance at him."

But to-night—this Christmas Eve—Lion had gone with the boot-blacks for a lark, ordering Chub not to stir out of the quarters, and may be he would bring him something. The chance was such a slight one, as Chub had learned to his sorrow, and the streets were so busy and bright, he had first sauntered just up to the park, and then just past the blocks, until now here he was right by Blank Avenue Church. He knew the place well. He had seen the people — well-dressed, quiet-behaved people — coming away from there many a Sabbath. But that it was built for any other than well-dressed, genteel people never entered Chub's head. As he came up opposite the door, some one passed in and left it ajar. The night-wind swung it a little bit farther, giving Chub a picture that attracted him at once, so that he turned in at the gate, crept up the steps, and dodged in at the door. The vestibule was quite deserted, and seemed a trifle dark compared with the brilliant audience room. Far down the aisle rose the trees, and Chub thought he had never seen any thing so gorgeous in all his life. On he crept, very slyly, toward the audience-room. It was very full, so full that not a pew seemed to have an empty seat for him. The minister was talking, and every head was turned toward the front. He was telling them that the trees were preaching a better sermon than he could. How they told over again the old song that blessed the world so long ago, "Peace on earth, good-will to men." How the good news of giving and receiving was the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Chrlst. A simple little talk, of which Chub did not understand much, except that those trees full of beautiful things were preaching sermons.

"Jolly kind o' sermons," thought Chub, "wisht they'd preach one to me; but they won't though."

After they had sung again—and O! how they did sing that night—the minister called up some of the teachers to help him, and they began unloading the trees, calling the names of the scholars in a loud, cheery way as if it was the biggest fun in the world; in answer to which, many happy little boots and shoes went squeaking merrily up the aisle. It was a bright picture, and little unnoticed Chub took it all in with his big wondering eyes, and pushed back his unkempt hair to get a better view. Presently the minister seemed to have a little trouble in reading a name. He stepped to the light, looked at it on both sides, smiled, hesitated, and finally announced, "For the little boy who hasn't any present." Every body stopped talking and

listened, and some even dared to laugh. There was a little pause, and the minister read it again. Here the organist, a funny young man, arose, and was about to claim it, when there was a sonnd of shuffling up the aisle, an odd sound for the soft-carpeted church.

The little girl with the biggest doll of all forgot her treasure for the moment, while they all stared, and the little figure in the old boots and unkempt hair shuffled on. And this is what the gentle-voiced minister did. He stepped down from the platform, and as the grimy little hands came timidly out from their shelter of big long sleeves to receive the goldy orange and gay bag, this minister, who told about the trees preaching sermons, (the jolly kind o' sermons!) just put his arm on Chub's shoulder in a hearty way, not a bit like the way that the policeman grabbed him, and said, "Glad to see you, my son. It's for you, sure enough, and we all wish you a Merry Christmas."

O, it was such a long aisle going down, with every body peeking at him, and nodding their heads after him. There was a pleasant-faced lady, more than half the way down, who twinkled her eyes in the most satisfied, delighted way you ever saw, and when he reached her seat, she just slyly slipped her orange into his hand—for Lion, of course, though how she knew there was a big brother in the family nobody knows.

On through the dusky vestibule, out into the street he rushed, stopping under a lamp-post to be sure that his treasures were safe, then trotting swiftly through the first lane toward the depot, not minding now that every body rushed by him with full arms too? Down into the corner of the basement, where the gruff, kind janitor let them sleep, he crept. Surely enough, there was Lion already turned in, though it was Christmas Eve. The corner was lighted by a glimmer from the restaurant overhead.

"Where yer bin?" demanded Lion, in his crossest tone. A policeman had spoiled their fun, and he felt quite ready to take vengeance on the youngster who had dared to run off and have a good time, for the chuckle he gave at sight of Lion announced that something unusually rich was in the breeze.

"Upt the church. An' yere's the sermon the parson's a preachin'," quite out of breath with his run, and bringing forth his Christmas to divide with Lion.

"Sermon?" demanded Lion, starting up.

"'S wat he said. Jolly kind, aint it?"

In answer to which Lion grunted something he could not understand, and proceeded to dispose of his share.

"See here," he declared, stopping midway in his orange, "yer sech a little chap yer didn't understand the parson. He never said no such thing."

"Did, too," declared Chub, "an' next Sunday, when the big bell rings up in the steeple' yer ken go an' see for yerself. It's where I'm goin'."

Sure enough, the Sunday following this Christmas Eve, two odd little figures, Chub rather being the leader now, stood in the vestibule of Blank Avenue Church, feeling and looking out of place among the well-dressed, well-behaved people, I agree. There's no knowing but that they would have slipped out again, if just then the pleasant-faced lady had not come in and spied them.

How it all came about I haven't time to tell, but do you know there is now a boy in that city who calls that church and that Sunday school his church and Sunday school, and just listen while I whisper that he is the boy who, on a Christmas Eve not long since past, "hadn't any."—*S. S. Advocate.*

Love.

In Chicago, a few years ago, there was a little boy who went to one of the mission Sunday schools. His father moved to another part of the city, about five miles away, and every Sunday that boy came past thirty or forty Sunday schools to the one he attended. One day a lady who was out collecting scholars for a Sunday school met him and asked him why he went so far, past so many schools. "There are plenty of others just as good," said she.

"There may be as good, but they are not so good for me," he said.

"Why not?" she asked.

"Because they love a fellow over there," he answered.

Ah! love won him. How easy it is to reach people through love! Sunday school teachers should win the affection of their scholars if they wish to lead them to Christ.—*Sel.*

At the mouth of a Cornish mine there is this advice: "Do not fall down this shaft, as there are men at work at the bottom of it."

For the Myrtle.

Reform.

RICHARD DUNSTON used to spend nearly all of his evenings with his drinking companions in a liquor saloon. There he squandered the money that should have clothed and fed his wife and children.

As the winter wore on, they grew poorer and

poorer and suffered more and more. Cold and hunger pinched them every day, until at length Mrs. Dunston was laid upon her bed with famine-fever, and at sunset of a December day she died.

Harry the older of the two children, had followed his father's example, and spent most of his time with bad companions away from the home-roof.

Little Mamie was all that was left to the dying mother, and, scarcely more than baby as she was, she stood alone watching the mystery of death.

When the mother ceased to breathe, and no longer answered to her call, the frightened child ran crying into the street, and found her way to the saloon, where her father was drinking.

No one of those hardened men will ever forget the sight of the child, coming to them out of the driving storm, with her pale frightened face, and her cry of anguish.

"Oh papa" she said "come home, for I cannot wake my mama from her sleep, and I'se all alone in the cold dark house."

Richard Dunston did not need a second call. He knew what that unawakening sleep meant. A dreadful sense of what his evil deeds had brought upon his household, came upon him.

Catching little Mamie in his arms, he rushed out into the wild storm, and bore her to the desolate room where his dead wife lay. He was not many minutes between the saloon and death-chamber, but those minutes seemed to have an eternity of thought crowded into them. All his past came before him. The love again flooded his heart that he had once borne that wife whom he had chosen out from all the world to be the companion of his joys and sorrows. That wife to whom he had made the earth-life a horror and a distress, who had for years never seen an hour of real happiness, now lay dead before him. And he had been her murherer.

Yes, he knew that he had as really shortened her life as if he had used the pistol or the murderous knife.

And here were his motherless children made so by his want of self-control. Can we wonder that a horror of darkness fell upon him, and that conscience made a wretchedness of the days which followed.

Yet in those wretched days his awakened conscience held him away from the place where he had been wont to yield to temptation, and the better man within him rose to take possession of him.

He realized his duty to his children, and resolved that by God's help, he would do that duty faithfully.

That resolve has never been broken, and Richard Dunston has been from that day a sober and upright man. Yet he is a sad man, for memory will not entirely lose its power over any one that has done so great a wrong.

But the passage of the years will dim this shadow for God is merciful, as well as just, and He will send peace and prosperity once more to the household where repentance has begun and righteousness will reign.

E. M. B.

For the Myrtle.

Memory Pictures.

Of all the rare beautiful things
That we see,
There is nothing more fair
Than a beautiful tree.

And the joy of south-lands
With their blessing and balm,
Have no lovelier sight
Than the tall waving palm.

There is grace in its motion
And grace in its form,
As it basks in the sunbeams,
So genial and warm.

And whoever has been
Neath a tropical sky,
Will always keep palms
As a permanent joy. E. M. B.

Prairie Life.

No. V.

RATTLESNAKES.

There is just one good thing about rattlesnakes—they never strike without giving warning. I have killed a good many of them. One day papa sent me to get a horse that was feeding a few rods from the door and I nearly stepped on a rattlesnake coiled up asleep in the sun. Papa killed him and we sent the rattles East in a letter.

Mamma was pulling radishes in the garden and got her hand within six inches of one asleep under the leaves. We had a small box full of rattles—mamma said she was glad of every new rattle—it meant one snake the less.

Our land has never been plowed before, that is why they are so plenty. One day a cow-boy came to our house with rattles hung all around the edge of his hat. He had been where they were plenty too. Once, one went across my path: he did not stop, but he shook his rattle at me three times by way of warning.

Rattlesnakes cannot strike unless they are coiled; then they spring their length, which is generally about two feet. They are found all over the United States. H. H. D.

Children of the Tyrol.

Perhaps American children sometimes think they have a hard lot—so much work, so much study, so few toys, so few "good times." But I think they will change their minds when they hear about their little brothers and sisters in the Tyrol and will never feel like complaining again.

Early in March the "Schwabenkinder," so called becanse they are sent into Swabia every spring to work in the farm-houses of that country, begin to gather at different points in the Tyrol. Many of these children are not more than eight years of age; and the little ones weep bitterly when leaving their poor homes for the first time. The children are poorly clothed. Each one carries a little stick in his hand, and has a little bundle on his back containing a clean garment and a piece of bread and cheese.

A little company is formed, with an old man or woman in charge of it, and the journey begins. The little ones wander on foot from village to village, living on charity until at last they reach a large town where a "market" is held. Tired, foot-sore, the children line the streets, waiting for employers to come and "buy" them! And this is a sad, strange sight. The farmers go picking out the stout, hearty-looking children; and the children eagerly wait their turn, often crying out to a kind-looking man, "Please buy me! please buy me!"

Sometimes brothers and sisters are separated, and a little wailing follows: but it cannot be helped. Then the market closes, the children go to their new homes, and the work of the summer begins.

It is a comfort to know that, as a rule, the children are well treated. Their work generally consists in looking after the cattle, sheep, pigs, and poultry, and leading the horses or oxen in the plowing-field.

In the autumn the old man or woman appears again, ready to take the children back to their homes. They return better dressed than when they came, having earned a good suit of clothes, besides a little money; and we can easily believe that this journey is a much happier one than the first. But at the best, it seems hard and sad that these tender children should be sent away from home, love, and care, to "begin the world" among strangers; to suffer from loneliness and homesickness, and sometimes from real sickness, without the touch of a mother's hand; and at last learn to get along without the sweet ministries of love which makes home a little heaven. —*Sel.*

Boys are often annoyed at "bumble-bees," and wonder whatever in the world they are made for; but an ocean-steamer recently took out to New Zealand, as freight, a consignment of them. At present clover does not "seed" in that country, though it grows readily, because there are no bumble-bees to fertilize the flowers. The importer hopes that the bumble-bees will save him £5,000 a year in clover-seed.

To be happy, you must be good and kind: no cross, disagreeable child can be happy.

SELECTIONS FOR S. S. CONCERTS.

The Offering.

We children come to Thee,
Master and Friend ;
Into our hearts, we pray
Thy spirit send.
Let us Thy Helpers be,
To all, on land or sea,
Thy bond or free.

'T is a little that we own,
Master and Friend ;
That little brought to Thee,
Will farther spend.
Take then our love and prayer,
Wing them to do and bear
Good everywhere.

Oh, take gifts we bring,
Master and Friend ;
We know whate'er they lack,
Thyself will lend.
Take each poor word and deed
And make them rich to feed
Some heart in need.

Oh, take our very selves,
Master and Friend ;
Our busy feet, on Thy
Dear errands send.
Our hands make swift to do,
Our hearts in serving true,
This sweet life through.

Charms.

I know a word of power to smite
The armies of embattled wrong ;
Like driven leaves go down the strong,
Before the matchless name of *Right*.

I know a word wherewith to ope
All prison-doors in any land ;
A spell that freeth heart and hand—
It is the blessed name of *Hope*.

And one that, said above the dust,
Can wake the beauty sleeping there ;
'Tis that whereby the earth is fair—
The lowly, tender name of *Trust*.

And one there is can lighten hell,
It is the dearest name above ;
All power is in the name of *Love*,
Her watchman answer, All is well !

Who knoweth these shall work his will,
'Tis he shall bind the spoiler Fate ;
For him doth sorrow's secret wait,
And blooms the hidden heart of ill.

My soul hath given all to buy,
For these she counteth loss but gain ;
With these she shall outweary pain,
And shall outwatch eternity.

And lightly shall she conquer Death ;
He flees before the immortal race,
With such a glory in the face,
And such a rapture on the breath.

The Flood and the Ark.

After the fall of Adam ;
After that dreadful crime—
The murdering of Abel,
Way back in the olden time,

The earth was filled with people
By river, lake and sea,
And all were very wicked,
Except one family :

The family of Noah,
Composed of persons eight ;
To them God told his purpose,
To send a deluge great,

Which should destroy all living,
Except a chosen few ;
And then he told his servant
What he must straightway do :

To make an ark of gopher,
A vessel strong and large,
To float upon the water,
Like a great ship, or barge.

And when the ark was finished,
By order of the Lord,
The animals, by couples,
Came in with one accord.

And last the chosen family
Went in ; God shut the door,
And such a flood descended
As ne'er was seen before.

The mountain tops were covered,
The plains and valleys, too ;
All living creatures perished,
Except the chosen few.

The gentle heart that thinks with pain
It scarce can lowliest tasks fulfill,
And, if it dared its life to scan,
Would ask but pathway low and still—
Often such lowly heart is brought
To act with power beyond its thought ;
For God, through ways they have not known,
Will lead his own.—*Selected.*

Through the ill
And discord round about you, keep
Your faith in human nature still.

HARVEST PAGE.

Hidden Seed

241. — ENIGMA.

I am composed of ten letters.
My 1, 2, 3, 4 is the opposite of go.
My 7, 8, 6 is a heavy weight.
My 9, 10, 6 is plural of man.
My 5, 6, 7, 8 it to.
My whole is an invitation of Christ. *Beth.*

242. — ANAGRAM.

Eh thta tehivg ontu hte ropo hslal tno lcka.
Clara G. Locke.

243. — DROP LETTER PUZZLE.

J—s—s—e—t. *Maude Lake.*

244. — ANAGRAM.

Frefus tiltle nedrlich ot mceo tnou em.
Alice Williams.

245. — ENIGMA.

I am composed of 31 letters.
My 4, 17, 10, 26 is used in knitting.
My 3, 29, 14, 31, 19 is a small animal.
My 20, 13, 2, 19, 23 is desired by all.
My 15, 17, 22, 16 is sound mental condition.
My 30, 13, 1, 27, 4 is the opposite of quiet.
My 8, 25, 24, 20, 16, 10 is a useful tool.
My 5, 21, 28, 7, 12 is a belief.
My 11, 17, 7, 28, 26 is a fabric.
My 9, 6, 11, 19 expressed comfort.
My 31, 29, 18, 9 is painful.
My whole is in the New Testament.
Harry F. Williams.

WINTER EVENING AMUSEMENT.

BLOWING OUT THE CANDLE.

No end of merriment has frequently been created by this simple, innocent game. It is equally interesting to old people and to little children, for in many cases those who have prided themselves on the accuracy of their calculating powers and the clearness of their mental vision have found themselves utterly defeated in it. A lighted candle must be placed on a small table at one end of the room, with plenty of walking space left clear in front of it. One of the company is invited to blow out the flame blindfold. Should any one volunteer, he is placed exactly in front of the candle, while the bandage is being fastened on his eyes, and told to take three steps back, turn round three steps, then take three steps forward and blow out the light. No directions could sound more simple. The opinion that there is nothing in it has often been expressed by those who have never seen the thing done. Not many people, however, are able to manage it—the reason why, you young people will soon find out, if you decide to give the game a fair trial.

238. — ENIGMA.

Cease to do evil learn to do well.

239. — ANAGRAM.

When my father and mother forsake me the Lord will take me up.

240. —ENIGMA.

Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

OUR HARVESTERS.

CONNUDRUMS.

When is a chimney like a chicken? When it is a little *foul* (fowl).

When a ham is taken from a dinner-table without being touched, why does it resemble Hamlet when delivering his celebrated soliloquy, "To be or not to be?"
Because it is *Ham-let alone.*

Walter W. Bartlett, 5; Philip H. Remington, 3; Jennie E. Jacobs, 7; Percy Mason, 1; Lewis D. Christie, 7; Mary Christie, 7.

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